

UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS
Marine Corps University
User's Guide to Marine Corps Values

LEADERSHIP TRAINING

"An army of deer led by one lion is more feared than an army of lions led by one deer."

1. Introduction. As SNCOs and officers, you are the leaders of the Marine Corps. The ability to lead is not inherently bred into your character, it is a skill you develop with experience.

2. Overview. The purpose of this discussion is to give you an understanding of how to effectively conduct leadership training.

3. References. MCO 5390.2.

4. Discussion Leader Notes. N/A

5. Discussion

a. Leadership training goals. The primary goal of Marine Corps leadership training is "to develop the leadership qualities of all Marines to enable them to assume progressively greater responsibilities to the Marine Corps and society." The secondary goal is to enhance mission accomplishment and troop welfare. There are several ways to accomplish this.

(1) Foster the constant application of leadership principles by all Marine leaders, particularly leadership by example.

(2) Develop proper moral and ethical behavior.

(3) Promote fair treatment for all Marines with special emphasis on equal opportunity and prevention of sexual harassment.

(4) Improve personal and performance counseling.

(5) Develop the team concept and stress teamwork in daily activities to reinforce the team concept.

(6) Improve leadership instruction in the formal schools.

b. Marine Corps' policy on leadership training. The following policies apply to all leadership training programs:

(1) Commanders are responsible for leadership training. Paragraph 1100 of the Marine Corps Manual provides the guidelines for the Marine Corps' leadership goals.

(2) All Marines, officer and enlisted, will participate in leadership training. There are no set number of hours in which leadership training can be accomplished. Most leadership training can be foreseen and scheduled in a leadership training plan.

(3) Some leadership training results from the leader's recognition of potential problems, real or perceived.

(4) Leadership training will emphasize the dignity of each individual Marine and the quality of human understanding.

(5) Leadership training will be conducted in accordance with recognized and proven traditional military techniques and principles. Commanders must guard against the employment of training techniques inconsistent with Marine Corps policies and mission-oriented approach. The techniques that are specifically forbidden are listed in detail in MCO 5390.2.

c. Responsibilities and duties of those individuals involved in leadership training. Responsibilities for leadership training are broken down into three categories. They are the duties of the commander, instructors, and trainees.

(1) Duties of the commander include developing plans and programs, providing guidance, selecting training goals, allocating resources, training instructors, and evaluating the training.

(2) Duties of the instructors encompass preparing, conducting, and evaluating the training. Additionally they are responsible to their commanding officers to report on training status, recommend activities, and gather resources.

(3) The trainee must understand the importance of the training, understand what is expected from him or her, and ensure he/she is free of mental or physical distractions. Furthermore, they must self motivated to seek opportunities to practice this leadership training.

d. Developing a leadership training plan. MCO 5390.2 requires commanders to prepare a leadership training plan.

Although it does not provide a specific list of topics, it outlines the training guideline and how it will be integrated into all other training .

Because the order does not specify leadership training topics, commanders have great flexibility in selecting topics to teach. As times change, inevitably, topics change. What was once a non-issue may become an issue and something that needs to be implemented into the training plan. For example, 10 years ago, sexual harassment was not an issue. Now, after a number of recent incidents, sexual harassment has become a major issue and something that all leadership training plans address.

e. Required leadership training topics. Although MCO 5390.2 doesn't specify training topics, there are some topics that are directly related to the leadership training goals that are required by other regulations. The leader should consider including these topics in his/her leadership training plan. Not only will their inclusion enhance the accomplishment of the leadership training goals, but it will also fulfill the related training requirements. Required topics and their applicable orders are:

(1) Sexual harassment - MCO 5300.10

(2) Essential subjects - MCO 1510.2 (Includes the Code of Conduct and military law/UCMJ, history, customs, and courtesies, close order drill, interior guard.)

(3) Troop information program - MCO 1510.25 (Includes drug abuse, equal opportunity, personal affairs, character and moral education, and personal conduct.)

(4) Equal opportunity - MCO 5354.1

Periodically, additional requirements for leadership-related training are addressed in CMC White Letters, ALMARs, and messages.

f. The training plan. Any training plan should be oriented to fulfilling the Marine Corps' leadership training goals. In doing so, it should meet the unit's specific needs, fulfill each Marine's needs, and develop each Marine's leadership abilities.

There are four characteristics of a unit which indicate success or failure in the unit's leadership. They are morale, esprit de corps, discipline, and proficiency. These indicators can be used as a gauge for measuring the unit's leadership

effectiveness and assist in determining its leadership training requirements. By using these indicators as an evaluation tool, leaders can determine their unit's leadership needs and develop a training program to fulfill those need.

g. Preparing the leadership plan. There are eight basic steps in developing a leadership training plan. They are:

(1) Analyze. This step is the responsibility of the commander and can be called his/her estimate of the training situation. When developing a unit's leadership training program, the analysis should consider the unit's mission, size, leadership needs (unit's and individual's), guidance from higher headquarters, desired training goals, resources available, teaching ability of instructors, and methods utilized.

(2) Plan. The commander produces a leadership training plan based on Marine Corps leadership philosophies, policy guidance, historical references, and personal experiences of the commander. Additionally, the plan needs to take into account the unit's activity schedule, operational requirements, and resources.

(3) Provide/direct. The commander provides the plan to those who need it for execution, directs them to execute the plan, and provides the resources required for its execution.

(4) Prepare/schedule/announce. The instructor receives the plan and reviews it for specific guidance and publishes the training schedule. He or she then conducts research and confirms availability of resources, supervises the rehearsals, and provides feedback to the commander.

(5) Conduct. The instructor then conducts the leadership training according to his/her schedule and resources available.

(6) Supervise/inspect. Both the commander and instructor are responsible for supervising/inspecting training. The commander supervises the program by conducting inspections during scheduled events and by observing his/her command. The instructor supervises the program by attending classes, checking reports and records, and providing feedback to the commander for evaluation.

(7) Evaluate. The commander and the instructor must evaluate the program's effectiveness by any means available. Reviewing reports and records is not sufficient. The true evaluation stems from how much the program enhances the

accomplishment of the leadership training goals by meeting the needs of the unit.

(8) Correcting. Again, both the commander and instructor are responsible for making corrections in the training program. The instructor evaluates his execution of the program, takes whatever corrective action he/she can within his/her purview, and provides feedback to the commander.

These steps are not necessarily completed in a step-by-step sequence, but are accomplished in a continuous cyclical fashion. For example, after you have conducted (implemented) the training, you supervise the implementation, evaluate the effectiveness of the training, and make corrections. You continue this process which enables you to catch errors in training content or keep up with changes.

h. Implementing leadership training. Leadership training should be accomplished using the method best lending itself to the topic and situation. The real importance lies not in the method itself, but in how well the method achieves the instructional goal. Some of the most effective methods of presenting training are given below.

(1) Lecture - This technique is good if you have a lot of information and a short period of time to present it. It is good for a specific topic or for inexperienced audiences.

(2) Guided discussion - This is used for a more in-depth discussion of a topic; or to get an answer for groups with similar rank (e.g., NCOs, SNCOs, or officers); or when working on a unit problem solving situation.

(3) Panel discussion - This is used to gain insights from personnel with greater experience or a particular expertise.

(4) Case studies - A case study is used for classroom simulation to gain a more realistic learning experience. The difficulty with this technique is available "cases" and good examples of solutions that enhance the study.

(5) Practical application - This is used for developing command presence and confidence. It allows for the trainee to get hands-on practice which translates to better understanding and ultimately, enhances learning.

(6) Social gatherings - Leadership training can be accomplished by informal gatherings of seniors and subordinates during officers' call, mess nights, and other unit activities.

Not all techniques are suitable for all subjects and audiences. Each topic must be packaged for presentation based on the needs of the unit/audience.

i. Integrating leadership training into other types of training. There are many ways to integrate leadership training into other types of training. It is up to the commander to come up with ways to combine training; integrating leadership training is limited only by the commander's imagination. Some ways to integrate leadership training are:

(1) Have subordinates perform the duties of the next higher grade or position. For example, have a platoon sergeant perform some of the duties of the company gunny, or have a squad leader perform the duties of the platoon sergeant. Not only will MOS training be accomplished, but leadership training as well.

(2) Give subordinates tasks in areas where they have expertise. For example, assign a sergeant as a rifle coach who has interest in and is an expert rifleman, or, encourage your radio operator to instruct radio procedures.

(3) Schedule exercises in a progressive manner starting at the lowest section/team level with the stated purpose of concentrating on developing leadership skills.

(4) Do not always lead yourself. Put the weakest map reader in front until he/she improves and try to give everyone a chance. Anyone who blindly follows a mistake shares in the guilt of the mistake.

j. Evaluating a leadership training program's effectiveness. The commander cannot wait for an inspector to advise that his/her leadership training program is ineffective. To properly evaluate the program, the commander must have constant feedback so he/she can initiate appropriate corrective action. General Bruce C. Clarke, USA (Ret), "A Study in Leadership and Training," provides a few words of advice that are appropriate:

An organization does well only those things the boss checks.

You have to go after the facts. They won't come to your office.

Learn to be a good competent inspector. Those things not inspected are neglected.

Good training starts with good training management.

The commander has records to aid in evaluating or recording the unit's leadership training. The leadership training order states that, "Commanders will maintain only such records as they deem necessary to conduct and manage leadership training within their unit." Some suggestions are:

- (1) Maintain a leadership training plan
- (2) Publish a schedule of leadership classes, to include topics, hours, and instructors
- (3) Maintain a file of attendance rosters
- (4) Maintain a file for lesson guides and training aids
- (5) Schedule concurrent/integrated leadership exercises/classes
- (6) Records can be studied and compared to the master plan as an indication of whether the plan is being executed as planned, who is being or has been trained, and what subjects are being covered or emphasized. These records cannot provide a complete evaluation of the training program's effectiveness. In addition, the commander must observe the unit in action on a daily basis and receive feedback from his subordinates to get a more accurate picture of the effectiveness of the training program.

6. Summary. Leadership training is not merely a skill but an art. Due to the diverse roles and mission of the Marine Corps, Commanders must pay special attention to the leadership needs of their subordinates. It is critical to both morale and unit effectiveness that leadership training be implemented into a unit's training schedule.

7. Appendices N/A